

San Diego DX Club Bulletin

May 2015



A Short History of DXing from Tibet

MAY PROGRAM

EARL TOWSON, N1QI, WILL PRESENT: EME - FOR THOSE WHO WOULD
LIKE TO WORK SOME REALLY CHALLENGING DX

MEETING NOTICE:

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2015

JOIN US AT THE SIZZLER, 3755 Murphy Canyon Road,
San Diego, CA 92123 (858) 278-6988

SOCIAL HOUR, 5:00 P.M. DINNER, 5:30 P.M.

MEETING, 6:30 P.M.

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A Word from the Prez . . .

Wild Bill, WB6BFG



Greetings members!

I hope this finds everyone in good spirits and that you had a great Memorial Day weekend. Thanks to those that have served our country! Also hope that those that made the trip up to Arnie Shatz, N6HC QTH for the SCCC meeting had a great time!

The SDDX Club is in the early stages of planning this year's Summer Bash. The tradition was started years ago by Jim McCook, W6YA and this year Jim Stevenson, W6YI, will once again host the party. The DX Summer Bash will be at his QTH 10250 Paseo de Flora in [Valley Center](#) on August 2nd, 2015. It will be great to see everyone there. All members of [SCCC](#) and [SCDXC](#) are invited. So save the date and be ready to be asked to help out in one fashion or another. More information will be released and will also be posted on the clubs website along with W6YI's QRZ page.

The sunspots are declining as cycle 24 dwindles, went below 100 for the first time in a long while. You can see the decline in solar flux in addition to the decline in predicted numbers by downloading the spreadsheet at <http://bit.ly/1KQGbRm> which shows us the daily readings and the shifting 45-day predictions from NOAA/USAF.

Special thanks to Bob Brehm, AK6R, for his fine presentation on RFI solutions last month!

The May meeting will be at The Sizzler. This month's presentation will be by Earl Towson, N1QI. He will discuss the problems involved in doing Earth-Moon-Earth (EME).

Earl Towson is a retired aerospace engineer with a lifelong interest in astronomy. Since retiring he now supports San Diego State's Astronomy Department as a guest lecturer for Astrobiology and Planetary Sciences. Please join us for an evening of fun, food and camaraderie!

Here's an article about the Spratly DX0P operator that took ill while there. <http://goo.gl/PtxgEr>

Here's another historical video about Amateur Radio. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= mK_fNmQxzs

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Secretary/Treasurer Reports

Ellen, N6UWW



San Diego DX Club – April 2015

Secretary's Report

The April 22nd meeting was conducted by Wild Bill – WB6BFG. Visitors Bud - N6BRV (our newest dues paying member – Welcome!), Axel - KI6RRN and Conrad – KG6HXS. SANDARC elections are coming up at the end of the month.

Old Business – none.

New Business – none.

A Roundtable discussion followed and included lots of positive reviews of the recent International DX Convention in Visalia and “new ones” worked. Matt - AE6HF is looking for an old Johnson TR switch (dual triode). Tom – N6JOJ has a Yaesu FT-450D for sale (\$600 new in box). Larry – N6NC reports he is the oldest graduate student ever enrolled in Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Don - KK6IGC has a new call-sign: NA6DC. John – K6AM will be the MC at 2016 Visalia Convention. (Now is when you go mark your calendars for April 14-16, 2016) He read the Top Ten for 17 meters: #1 Jim – W6YA (who’s recovering nicely from knee surgery) with 339 countries worked. Top Ten for 12 meters was read: #1 Jim – W6YA with 327 countries worked. Jim – K6ZH will be in Esmeralda County for 7QP from his alternate QTH Goldfield, NV. He and Bud N7CW are planning a DXpedition to San Clemente Island to put DM02 on the air for the June VHF contest (second weekend in June). John – K6AM presented the “Big Gun” Award to Ron - WB1EAZ

Treasurer's Report

Statement Balance 4/30/2015: \$7390.89

Dues were due December 31. Dues are \$20 annually (\$30 for family memberships) and became delinquent January 31. Reminder e-mails were sent January 16. We currently have 81 members.

Dues checks can be sent (payable to San Diego DX Club Inc) to:

Ellen Utschig
2104 Poplar Rd
Oceanside, CA 92058-2332

Ellen, N6UWW

A Word from the Prez (Cont'd) . . .

Please remember that the club's newsletter is only as good as the information the editor receives, so please take the time to submit any DX related stories, tall tales, and musings of a madman or crazy lady for his consideration. Let's help Bob, K9RHY, keep our newsletter interesting.

73 & 88's to the pretty ones!

Wild Bill, WB6BFG

"To invent, you need a good imagination and a pile of junk." Thomas Edison

THE SDDXC TOP 10

By John, K6AM

TOTAL COUNTRIES WORKED ON 17 METERS

5/15	5/14	CALL	ZNS	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG	5/15	5/14	CALL	ZNS	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG
1.	1.	W6YA	40	?	?	339	-	1.	1.	W6YA	40	?	?	327	-
2.	2.	K6AM	40	326	332	334	+1	2.	2.	K6AM	40	309	314	319	-
3.	3.	N7CW	40	312	312	326	-	3.	3.	N7CW	40	260	260	300	-
4.	4.	K6XT	40	278	297	323	+7	4.	4.	K6XT	40	240	262	293	+9
5.	5.	K0XB	40	306	309	313	+3	5.	5.	W6YI	39	256	258	292	+8
6.	6.	W6YI	39	285	297	310	+5	6.	6.	K0XB	39	278	280	284	+9
7.	10	K6ZH	39	271	273	297	+25	7.	7.	N6CW	39	?	192	268	-
8.	7	N6CW	39	?	231	297	-	8.	8.	WB6BFG	40	232	234	254	+24
9.	9.	WB6BFG	39	269	271	289	+15	9.	-.	NA6L	38	225	246	NEW	
10.	8.	W6YOO	37	275	280	280	-	10.	-.	K6ZH	38	223	225	242	NEW

A couple of big jumps stir things up in the second half of the 17 meter list with Jungle Jim, K6ZH jumping way up with 25 new ones. Over on 12, several good reports in the top 8, but the order remains the same. Newcomers, NA6L and K6ZH are catching up fast, so look out! As cycle 24 rolls past its second peak, these bands have been very productive. There were lots of EU openings on 12 in the past few months. 17 remains a very viable band and should continue for several more years to come.

Both of these lists are much easier to break into than the other bands. If you're not playing the WARC bands, you're missing a chance to experience the thrill of working a new one several times every month. The little Cushcraft WARC dipole is all you need to get started. The newer Force 12 Antennas work on 12 and 17 with a couple dB of gain as well.

Each month, we will publish top ten lists for one of the lesser recognized but hard won categories. Coming up next, 160 meters, RTTY and band-countries. Please send me your totals for each band throughout the year and you will be listed in coming months. Use the convenient form at <http://www.sddxc.org> or bring 'em to the meeting.

From the Editor

Bob, K9RHY



A Short History of DXing from Tibet

I remember so vividly growing up in Chicago and working CW (and the odd bit of DX) from my attic ham shack. My WRL Globe Chief, Hallicrafters SX-99 and multi-band vertical were the portal that truly opened the world to me.

I also recollect thumbing through back issues (when I could tear them away from my better-heeled DX buddies) of Don Chesser's, W4KVK, original (and now so memorable) DX Magazine, relishing what I thought was the absolute pinnacle of DX achievement: working AC4RF or AC4YN in Tibet.

Well, that was then and this is now. The official DXCC list now notes that: (AC4) Only contacts made May 30, 1974, and before, count for this entity. Contacts made May 31, 1974, and after, count as China (BY).

With these memories still (somewhat) intact, I thought it might be interesting to do some digging into the history of DXing from Tibet. Although far from exhaustive, this issue of the SDDXC Bulletin shows the results of my digging.

1920's

This story starts before the AC4YN/AC4RF era. The first AC4 operation I could find in the literature was by AC4AA. There is virtually no information available about this Tibetan operation. The only mention of AC4AA I was able to find said: "1940 - Doc Stuart, W6GRL, worked AC4YN, for 40th zone. QSL not received till after WW II. Doc Stuart had eight rhombics on beach property in Ventura. Three prewar confirmed WAZs are ON4AU (QSO AC4AA in 1927), G2ZQ & J5CC."

1930's

The call AC4YN figures prominently in this story, but the better-known Reg Fox, a British agent who was in Tibet in the late 40's, was actually the second holder of the call. The first holder of AC4YN was Sir Evan Nepean, G5YN who was sporadically active from Tibet from 1936 to 1939. With the exception of the previously-mentioned AC4AA, Sir Evan was thought to be the only pre WW II station QRV from the independent nation of Tibet. This was the time when China invaded and annexed Tibet.

Three operators originally shared the call AC4YN, Evan Nepean, G5YN, Sidney Dagg and Reginald W. Fox.

Working and living conditions were extremely difficult for the earliest AC4 operators. A story about the first AC4YN operation includes the following observation: "All of his radio equipment was carried across the 14,600 ft Natu La pass from India into Tibet by a party of 50 men and 25 pack animals. En-route it was dropped into a river and had to be largely rebuilt. The 120lb battery charging engine wouldn't work at Tibet's high altitude, so some of the party returned to India to build a hand-cranked charger, which was then carried back to Tibet in the same fashion".



Ford operated from Tibet as AC4RF from 1948 to 1950, having enlisted as an apprentice in the Royal Air Force when he left school at 16. In 1943, he was posted to India but soon became disillusioned, and jumped at the offer of a job as radio operator in Lhasa, Tibet, at the end of World War II.

When WW2 ended, ham radio was again permitted, and a contact with Tibet was the most sought-after in the world: "We were our own licensing authority and I gave myself the call sign AC4RF (AC4 was the radio country code for Tibet, RF was for Robert Ford)."

Ford was captured and arrested on the Tibet-China border in 1950 by the invading Chinese People's Liberation Army along with the Governor General and other Tibetan officials. The People's Republic of China accused him of espionage, spreading anti-communist propaganda and other crimes.

Ford spent nearly 5 years in jail, in constant fear of being executed, and was subjected to interrogation and thought reform. Only in 1954 was he allowed to send a letter to his parents. At the end of 1954 he was tried for "radio espionage". His trial was held and he was sentenced to ten years jail. He was eventually released and expelled in 1955 after spending 5 years in jail.

1950's to 1970's

On or about October 7, 1950, China incorporated Tibet into the People's Republic of China. Ham radio was essentially silenced.

There were some AC4 operations on the air during the 1960's, most notably by Gus Browning, W4BPD as AC5A/AC4 in 1963 and later as AC4H in 1965.

Other non-so-well AC4 operations during these years included AC4NC from 1950 to 1953. AC4AX in 1959 and AC4TF in 1969.

1940's

Robert Webster Ford, CBE, was hired by the Tibetans in 1948 to create a modern communications, "modern" meaning something better than treks by mule over the highest mountains in the world. A letter home took five weeks to arrive, and even a message to Lhasa needed 15 days.

Ford was one of only 86 westerners to reach Lhasa between the British invasion of 1904 and 1950, when China annexed Tibet.



The Chinese Radio Sports Association (CRSA) was founded on April 3, 1964 as the national member society representing the People's Republic of China in the International Amateur Radio Union, which it joined in 1984. Prior to 1993, the only licensed amateur radio stations in the People's Republic of China were club stations shared by multiple individuals, and the CRSA was an association of local amateur radio clubs. After 1993, the organization opened its membership to individual amateur radio operators.

Looking through my QSL card collection, I see that my first BY contact was in 1984, so the “dry spell” for contacts with China was lengthy. And since Tibet was removed from the DXCC list in 1974, most memories of AC4 as a separate DXCC entity were just memories.

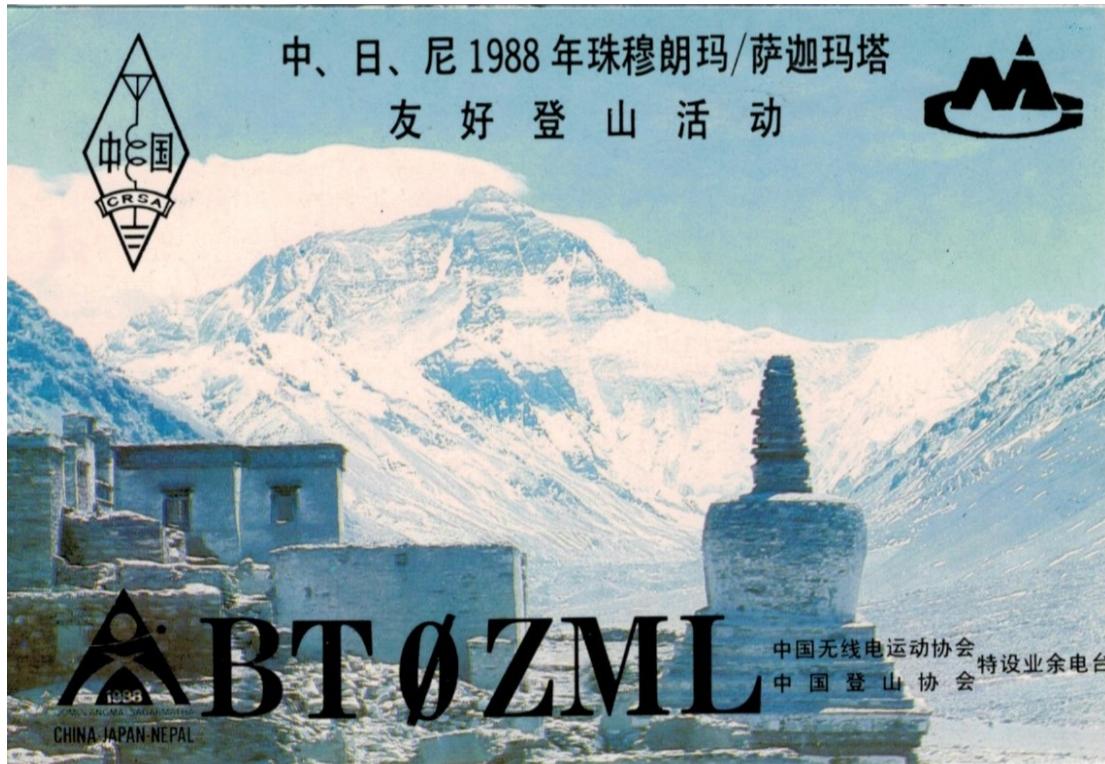
1980's to 1990's

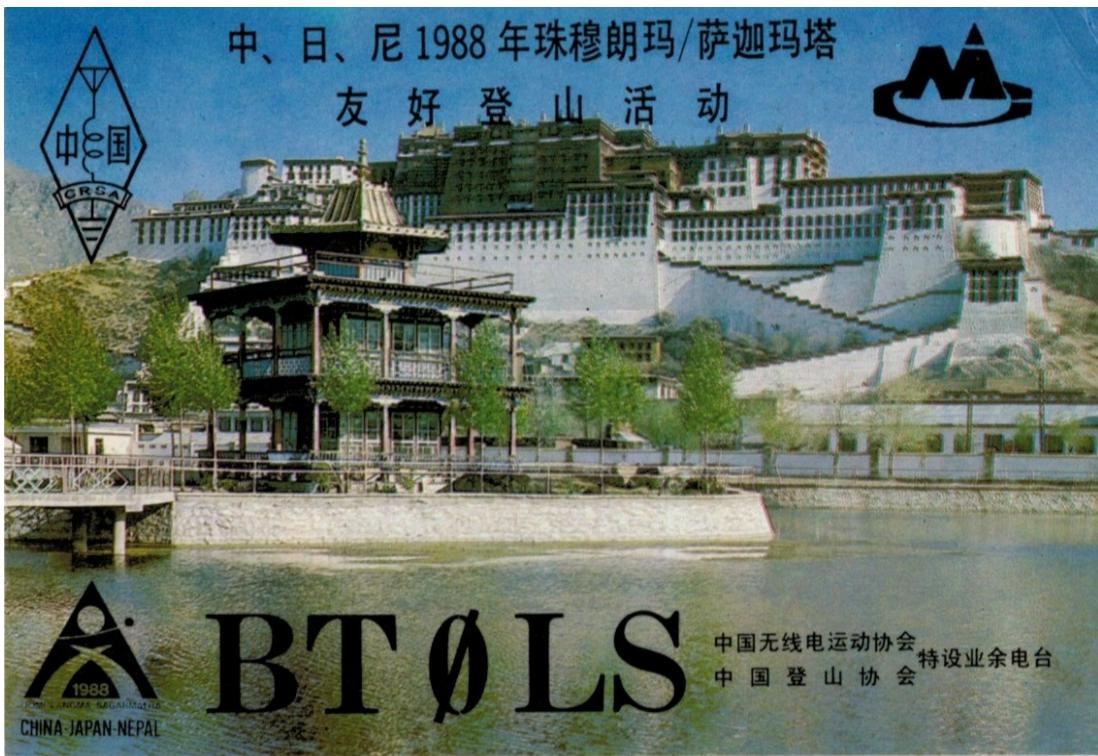
Two widely-worked Tibetan operations that took place during the 1980's were BT0LS and BT0ZML, both operating from China's Tibetan Autonomous Region.

BT0ZML is an interesting story. In May, 1988, China, Japan and Nepal formed a joint expedition to climb Mount Everest from the north and south sides. Chinese amateur radio provided all communications.

The north base camp used the call BT0ZML while the HQ station in Lhasa used the call BT0LS.

Several years ago during a visit to China, I met with a number of Beijing hams. One of the group, whose call I regrettably didn't write down, told me about a trip he took to Tibet on a Chinese train. His story started in Beijing and went on for days as he crossed the country from East to West. He eventually made it to Tibet but found the area to be non-inviting. Interestingly, since printed Chinese is independent of language or dialect, he could read everything in sight, but conversation with locals was impossible.





2000's

Other Tibet Autonomous Region (near Lhasa) operations included BY1WXD/0 for ten days between September 27 and October 7, 2012.

The Chinese operators claimed that this was to be "the first officially announced DXpedition activity in Tibet Autonomous Region of China by Chinese hams and they sincerely welcome DX chasers all over the world to work us."

Operators: BA7CK BA8IK BA9TX BD2FW BD4TS BD5FFK BD5QDM BD5SO BD9GQ BG0GE BG3MTK BG5TOW BG6MA BG9API and BG9XE.

Hams living in the Tibetan Autonomous Region today include BG8SIB and BG8SZG.

Today:

According to QRZ.COM, the call AC4RF is now held by James B. Vest in Sanford, NC. AC4YN is now held by Jeffrey R. Stafford in Winston Salem, NC, clearly signaling that we are at the end of an era.

QSL Storage Boxes

I have access to cardboard boxes that are excellent for storing QSL cards. They come in two sizes with inside dimensions of: 1) 5.5W x 3.75D x 18.5L and 2) 7.5W x 4.25D x 14.5L. Type 1 is perfect for the standard 3.5 x 5.5 inch QSLs and Type 2 accommodates the oversize styles from EU and JA. The boxes are clean, sturdy and in good condition with a fold over lid that inserts into the side for locking. They have printing on the top and sides. Let me know if you want any and I can deliver them at the club meetings.

Ron NØRR

SDDXC RESULTS
2014 ARRL SWEEPSTAKES CW CONTEST

CLASS	CALL	SCORE	QSO'S	MLTS	
MS - HP	W6YI (+ K6AM N6MJ N6AN N5ZO N6KI, ops)	231,238	1,393	83	#1 US/VE #2 OVERALL (ALL CLASSES)
MS - LP	NX6T (N6KI, N6CY, NODY, N6EEG, K4RB, KB7V, ops)	151,724	914	83	#1 SW DIV #2 US/VE
SO - U	K6ZH	103,086	621	83	#4 SW DIV
SO - U	N6NC	33,750	225	75	#11 SW DIV
SO - Q	N7CW	64,152	396	81	#3 SW DIV
SO - LP	WN6K	127,920	780	82	#5 SW DIV
SO - LP	W6JBR	2,052	38	27	
SO - HP	N5ZO	20,740	170	61	

SDDXC RESULTS
2014 ARRL SWEEPSTAKES PHONE CONTEST

CLASS	CALL	SCORE	QSO'S	MLTS	
MS - HP	W6YI (+K6AM, N6AN, N6KI, W2PWS)	341,960	2,060	83	#1 US/VE #3 all categories
SO - HP	K6NA (N6ED, op)	325,028	1,958	83	#1 SW DIV #4 US/VE
SO - LP	WN6K	209,990	1,265	83	#1 SW DIV #10 US/VE
MS - LP	NX6T (ops: (N6KI, N6CY, AF6WF, K6KAL, N6ERD, NODY, NN6X, N6EEG, WB6NBU, NA6MB)	137,780	830	83	#1 SW DIV #10 US/VE
SO - U	N6NC	8,584	74	58	